

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

For English learners with Thai background or Thai English Speakers (ThaiE), it is said that mastering English is not only shown by their ability to remember meanings, memorize spelling / alphabet, or arrange words or phrases into a sentence correctly; however, it must also be seen from the skill and fluency in pronouncing English sounds correctly. In connection to the latter, although there are ways to pronounce English sounds as Received Pronunciation (RP), there are still many ThaiE who do not know how to read phonetic symbols as transcriptions of pronunciation of words correctly. The Received Pronunciation (RP) transcription refers to the Standard English pronunciation system. It is expected that students and instructors can have a common reference when speaking English.

So as the English speakers, ThaiE is endeavoured to be able to pronounce sounds like the native speaker (Native Speaker of English / NSE); or, at least close to the Received Pronunciation (RP), standard British accent, American accent or General American (GA), or USA equivalent (Walker, 2001).

Furthermore, having the ability to pronounce sounds correctly turns out not only to be limited to mastering phonetic bases, but also requires mastery of other English knowledge, such as word order (syntax), word categories, word meanings, and other aspects which is the context in pronunciation.

The emergence of variations of English sound pronunciation in ThaiE begins with a shift in English sound pronunciation. The shift in the pronunciation of English sounds is a phenomenon that occurs in some countries that treats English as a foreign language or as a second language. It is common for some variations in the pronunciation of English sounds, so it is appropriate if English in its distribution has several dialects or accents in accordance with the location or individual who uttered it. In this context, English learners who speak Thai also make it possible to bring up variations of

English, or what is later referred to as Thai English (ThaiE). These cases of variations are categorized as a common fault that arises in pronouncing English sounds by Thai students.

The appearance of ThaiE is caused by several things or aspects, among which can be seen as in terms of phonological conditions (phonologically conditioned) words, differences in word categories, sound chains, tongue-twisters, compound words, and others (Katamba, 1989), (Kelly, 2000), (Jane, 2005).

Among the contexts in which ThaiE appears that allows for different pronunciation of the sound, tongue twisters are one of the most interesting and efficient contexts for knowing one's pronunciation ability (Qwerty Studios, 2002-2008). That is because with the context of tongue twisters, the problem of distinguishing word categories, similarity of sound, phonological conditions is also included.

For example, in the pronunciation of the words: chemise, English, handkerchief, shirt, and watch, there are differences in sound / ʃ / and / tʃ / as they appear in the difference, namely: the sound [ʃ] in the word chemise [ʃi'mi:z] became [tʃi'mi:z], English ['ɪŋɡlɪʃ] became ['ɪŋɡlɪdʒ], shirt [ʃɜ:t] became [tʃɜ:t] and sound [tʃ] as in the words handkerchief ['hæŋkətʃɪf] became ['hæŋkəʃɪf], ['hʌŋkəʃɪf] and watch [wɒtʃ] became [wɒʃ].

In addition, differences in the location of pressure (stress) also causes differences in pronunciation. In this case, mastery of the emphasis on words is closely related to the ability of ThaiE to differentiate word categories. For example, the word *present* which is pronounced with a pressure at the beginning of the word ['preznt] is different in its pronunciation if the location of the word pressure is on the second syllabus [prɪ'zent]. The first is a noun category meaning "gift", while the second is a verb category meaning "to convey".

The ability of the ThaiE to pronounce English sounds with no enthusiasm or lack of expression is influenced by their mastery of the Thai language. In Thai pronunciation there will be some decrease or increase in tongue height

when speaking vowels. So in the pronunciation of the English sound, ThaiE also seems to be less serious in its vocal processing. In addition, in the pronunciation of some English sounds, ThaiE often pronounces them as their phonemes. For example the word pajamas, the vowel sounds in the first syllable will be read as [ʌ] instead of [ə']. So, what sounds is the sound [pʌdʒʌmʌs] instead of [pə'dʒɑ:məz]. From that example, it can be seen that the sound level (voicing) for the sound [s] is not in accordance with the previous sound (does not adhere to the rules of phonological conditions); that there is a shift from the sound that should [z] to [s]. In general, Thai and English have different phonemes; however, in terms of sound the two languages show a similar pronunciation process. The similarity of the process of sound pronunciation leads to the existence of typical ThaiE in the pronunciation of English sounds by ThaiE, in certain sounds from Thai language will be used to fulfil the English sound pronunciation model.

In the English sound pronunciation, besides recognizing sound classifications such as consonant sounds, vowel sounds, and diphthong sounds and how they are pronounced (Jane 2005), (Roach, 1991), (Walfram, W. & Johnson, 1981) the learner who speaks them is also expected to be able to pronounce correctly in connection with the problem aspects sound or prosodic features, such as: length (length), pressure (stress), as well as the height of the slides (pitch) (Jones, 1983, pp. 1–8).

The ThaiE can be identified by lengthening the pronunciation of the vowel sounds and a slight shift at the point of articulation. For example, say the word kimono, instead of saying [əʊ] but [ɔ:] as seen in phonetic transcription [ki:mɔ:nɔ:].

Likewise, the pronunciations of the initial sound as in the word threads [θrɛdz], not as the sound [θ], however, as an aspiring [t] sound, namely [trɛdz]. What should be pronounced in accordance with the English sound description are voiceless (tan voiced), interdental, and fricative, in that context spoken by Thai ESL Students with sound tan, alveolar, and fricative. The same thing, do not rule out the pronunciation of the sound [θ] it also shifted slightly backwards

pronounced as alveo-interdental, in the area of combination between the back of the front tongue (between the tip and the blade of the tongue) with the area behind the upper teeth (alveolar ridge). From this it is evident that aspects of the pronunciation of English, namely phonetic details (phonetic details) are less so paid attention to by ThaiE.

The quality of the pronunciation of ThaiE which is less expressive and experiences a slight shift in the point of articulation also looks like the pronunciation of the word eight. If NSE / FSE will pronounce it as [eɪtθ] with the provision that the quality of sound pronunciation [t] is not as alveolar stop because it experiences an articulation point advancement, i.e. approaching interdental sound whose pronunciation quality is more like fronted sound [t̪] (whose pronunciation is closer to interdental sound); conversely, for the ThaiE learners, the pronunciation of the [t̪] sound will remain as alveolar stop sound, so that what is heard and what happens is like the loss of interdental sound, i.e. with the transcription [eɪt]. This can be understood and makes sense because there is an assimilation process with the sound that follows it, namely interdental sound [θ].

From the exposure of several cases as above, we can conclude that the diversity of variations in English sound pronunciation by ThaiE, among others, is caused by the lack of attention in correct English pronunciation, lack of knowledge about phonetic bases, ignorance of various English text contexts, and the difficulty of changing accents Thailand to RP. Such a phenomenon is also in line with the results of previous studies, that the NSE which is in a different area will speak the language with a different accent. For example, a British accent has a wider range because it will include a Scottish, Welsh and northern Irish accent. In principle, the English accent is distinguished from Northern and Southern (Roach, 1991, pp. 4–5). So differences in area and behaviour of speakers will produce differences in accent.

The study of sound, the results will be heard; however, if you have to present it with a writing system, researchers can present it with a phonetic transcription presentation system. The problem of phonetic transcription

systems can actually confuse English learners when they want to know how to pronounce correctly. Because even though there is an international phonetic transcription system (International Phonetic Alphabet or IPA), there are still some experts who use the system using their own symbols. For example, the phonetic symbol of Wolfram, there are some or some sounds that do not refer to IPA such as the sounds [ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ, δ]; instead, symbols are used sequentially [š, ž, č, ĵ, đ] (Walfram, W. & Johnson, 1981, p. 26).

Related to this research there were previous studies about the study of intelligibility which had previously been conducted by Rajadurai (2006) about the role of intelligibility; it has also raised questions about the intelligibility and phonology of new varieties of English, Jung, M-Y (2010) about The Intelligibility and Comprehensibility of World Englishes to Non-Native Speakers, Rias van den Doel (2011) about International Intelligibility in EIL, Dayag, Danilo T (2011) about Intelligibility of Philippine English, Laila (2012) who had studied about a case study of Javanese ESL Students in Tertiary Level which resulted that Native Speaker of English (NSE) and/or Foreign Speaker of English (FSE) have perceived intelligibly (53,8%) in pronouncing the English sounds. This reality represented that Javanese Learners of English (JLE)'s pronunciation is still perceived and understood properly by NSE/ FSE, Yuliati (2014) about investigation one of phonological features by Indonesian learners of English, final consonant clusters, and its intelligibility, Moedjito (2015) about global intelligibility should be the goal of pronunciation instruction at EFL classrooms, Matsuura, H., Rilling, S., Chiba, R., Kim, E.Y.J., Rini, N (2016) about Intelligibility and comprehensibility in English as a lingua franca: nativized English in Japanese, Moedjito, Jaelani & Asrobi (2019) about the factors which made EFL speakers' utterances more intelligible in the context of global intelligibility, Pathom (2013) about Thai university students' aspiration with regards to their pronunciation model, Lahdae, A (2015) about the Phonological Features Affecting Intelligibility of Thai Learners as Evaluated by Native and Non-Native Listener, Suntornsawet, J (2017) about The Intelligibility of Thai-Accented English Pronunciation to

Native Speakers and Non-Native Speakers of English, Duangsaeng, W & Chanyoo, N (2017) about Intelligibility of Thai English Restaurant Menus as Perceived by Thai and Non-Thai Speakers, Kim, S (2017) about the effect of Listeners' Communicative Experiences in Thai English on the Intelligibility of Thai English.

Similar to the previous research, the researcher wants to analyse about the intelligibility of Thai English (ThaiE) to Indonesian English Speakers because the researcher wants to know the English sound pronunciation by using demonstration model is not enough to simply play a tape recorder from the NSE, but it will be better if accompanied by an articulation explanation, an illustration of the mechanism of sound pronunciation by certain sound organs, as well as an appropriate presentation of the model (instructor). Likewise, the introduction of various contexts of English texts will also help students in the correct pronunciation of English sounds.

Due this fact, the researcher is encouraged to conduct a research entitled The Intelligibility of Thai English to Indonesian English Speakers.

B. Problem Statement

Based on the phenomena above, the researcher intends to propose statements below:

1. How is the intelligibility of Thai English Sounds to Indonesian English Speakers produced by students of Suksasart – Satit Demonstration of Secondary High School Khon Kaen University of Thailand?
2. What are the phonological features of Thai English produced by students of Suksasart – Satit Demonstration of Secondary High School Khon Kaen University of Thailand?

C. Limitation of the Study

In this research, the writer limits the research in the applied scope of pure linguistic studies which are limited to phonological and phonetic levels. In the application of phonetics, which is used as the basis for analysis, the researcher

focuses on the impressionistic articulator's phonetic type, namely the English sound pronunciation process in accordance with the real usage in ThaiE activities, telling English and capturing or understanding the sound according to the hearing ability and knowledge of the researcher. The subjects of this research are 10 Thai students consisted of 5 male students and 5 female students. All Thai English speaker were intermediate level students studying in various disciplines at their school (Demonstration of Secondary High School of Suksasart Khon Kaen University). Having started English in preschool, by secondary high school age they have complete enough of their education in English. Their average age was 17. 5. Ranging from 17 to 18. They study English as a second language for about 14 years. Under the auspices of Faculty of Education Khon Kaen University, one of Thailand's 4th largest and most renowned university located in the city of Khon Kaen as the centre of education in the city. For the setting taken by the researcher, it is also one of the international Demonstration schools, the Secondary High School Suksasart, the most expensive and most elite school in the city. The school's accreditation is very good because it is supported by English teachers from various countries such as England, Netherlands, America, Philippines and Africa. And supported by many facilities such as English Language Laboratory, ASEAN Language Laboratory and the European Language Laboratory. While the data is the pronunciation of vocabulary which are spoken by Thai students, from the data source recording of the students. This research will analyse using the theory of phonological and phonetic focus on the segmental features.

D. Objective of the Study

Based on the problem statements above, the goals of this research as follows:

1. To explain the intelligibility of Thai English Sounds to Indonesian English Speakers produced by students of Suksasart – Satit Demonstration of Secondary High School Khon Kaen University of Thailand.

2. To identify the phonological features of Thai English produced by students of Suksasart – Satit Demonstration of Secondary High School Khon Kaen University of Thailand.

E. Benefit of the Study

This research result can be divided into theoretical and practical benefit

1. Theoretically

This research will be useful as for the development of a science, namely in the field of phonetics: raises the phenomenon of the rules of the emergence of variations in English sound pronunciation that occur in the Thai speech community, especially the appearance that was uttered by ThaiE. The possibility of the appearance of variations of English sounds will affect the development of phonology and phonetic teaching materials. However, in this context the appearance of the pronunciation symptoms is expected to sustain English learning, namely as an alternative material that needs to be avoided. Namely as teaching material types of errors in the sound of English.

2. Practically benefits.

a. For the Researcher

This research helps giving input in extending knowledge and insight about analysing pronunciation as well as raising awareness of the importance of language teaching and learning.

b. For the reader

This research can be useful for English learners in general or ThaiE, especially in recognizing and identifying sounds. The sound description system will more clearly know the place or location of the certainty of its pronunciation through the identification of the speaker's articulation. And also in the arena or communication between nations, there are benefits for both the NSE / FSE and to get to know each other better through understanding sound variations and English accents in different countries such as in Thailand society. This is to anticipate the

fact that unusual accents are heard by NSE / FSE or not NSE / FSE, which causes difficulties in understanding for NSE / FSE and not NSE / FSE.

F. Research Paper Organization

The research paper will comprise in five chapters. A brief summary of the content of each chapter is described as follows:

Chapter I is introduction. It contains the background of the study, problem statement, limitation of the study, objectives of the study, benefits of the research and research paper organization.

Chapter II is a review of underlying theory. It contains the theoretical review, the previous study and theoretical framework.

Chapter III is research method. It contains the type of research, subject of research, object of research, data and data source, techniques for collecting data, trustworthiness, and technique of data analysing.

Chapter IV is research finding, discussion and limitation. In this chapter, the researcher attempt to analyse the type of English sounds produced by Thai student's and it is intelligibility or not to the Indonesian English Speakers. From the data finding, the researcher furthermore provides the core points out of the research.

Chapter V is conclusion, implication and suggestion of the researcher.